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TAGS: [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [IZ](#) [RS](#)

SUBJECT: ACTION REQUEST: RESPONSE TO GOR'S DIPNOTE ON IRAQ  
INCIDENT

REF: BAGHDAD 3825

Classified By: EUR A/S Daniel Fried, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (U) Department requests Ambassador pass to the Government of Russia (GOR) the results of Multi-National Force Iraq's (MNF-I) investigation into purported U.S. military involvement in a traffic accident with a Russian convoy in Baghdad. The Ambassador may draw upon these talking points:

-- After an extensive investigation, MNF-I has developed no evidence to suggest that any U.S. military personnel or vehicles were involved in any accident on November 19 in Baghdad along the road connecting the International Zone (IZ) to the Baghdad International Airport (BIAP).

-- U.S. Embassy Baghdad obtained more detailed information from the Russian Embassy in Baghdad, but even with this new information MNF-I was unable to find any evidence of U.S. involvement.

-- There is a possibility that the military vehicles in question could have been Iraqi, as the Iraqi inventory also includes vehicles that fit the description provided by the Russians.

-- We suggest that the GOR may want to consider approaching Iraqi authorities to request an investigation of possible Iraqi involvement. U.S. Embassy Baghdad is prepared to cooperate with the Russian Embassy in Baghdad to facilitate such an inquiry, should the GOR request assistance.

-- We are prepared to follow any additional leads the GOR might be able to provide on this incident.

12. (S) Background: The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs delivered a diplomatic note to the Department on November 21 protesting U.S. military involvement in a traffic accident that purportedly occurred on November 19 in Baghdad along Route Irish, the road connecting the International Zone (IZ) to the Baghdad International Airport (BIAP). The diplomatic note states that "a motorcade of four U.S. Army armored personnel carriers" approached a Russian diplomatic motorcade from the rear at a high rate of speed. The convoy is reported to have overtaken the Russian motorcade and forced it off the road - causing the first of three Russian vehicles to spin out of control, nearly overturning it. According to the Russian note, "the U.S. Army convoy continued on without stopping and was escorted by two U.S. military helicopters." It is also alleged that "American military personnel pointed their weapons" at the Russian diplomats as they passed. The Russians demanded an investigation and "punishment of the guilty U.S. Army personnel." They also note that they reserve the right to seek material and moral compensation, including possible compensation for the health of the victims.

13. (S) After an extensive investigation of these claims, MNF-I concluded on December 3 that there is no credible evidence to suggest that any U.S. military personnel or vehicles were involved in the November 19 accident (reftel). Separately, the Embassy's Regional Security Office (RSO) concluded that no vehicles under Chief of Mission authority were traveling on Route Irish on the date and time reported

by the Russians. Also, there were no RSO air assets either escorting a motorcade or traveling to BIAP along Route Irish on that date and time.

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